



**The Public Sector Duty:
2025 Progress Report on NUI's Action Plan**

DECEMBER 2025

1 Context

NUI has a legal obligation, the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination, and protect the human rights of its staff and service users. The Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 and Equal Status Acts 2000-2015 prohibit discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment in employment. The nine protected grounds under these Acts are gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, disability, age, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.

Implementation of the Public Sector Duty (PSD) consists of three main stages:

1. **Assess:** A public body is required to set out in its strategic/corporate plan an assessment of the equality and human rights issues relevant to its purpose and functions, in a manner that is accessible to the public. NUI has published an assessment report: [NUI PSD Assessment Report.pdf](#).
2. **Address:** A public body is required to set out in its strategic/corporate plan the policies, plans and actions to address issues raised in the equality and human rights assessment, in a manner that is accessible to the public. This document constitutes our plan to address human rights and equality matters in NUI identified during the assessment stage.
3. **Report:** A public body is required to report annually on developments and achievements in regard to the equality and human rights issues and actions, in a manner accessible to the public, in its annual report. NUI will incorporate PSD reporting into *Inside NUI* (triennial report) and will publish an annual update on PSD actions on the NUI website.

2 Action Plan

NUI identified a number of actions, outlined in the [Assessment Report](#). These actions are being implemented during the remainder of the NUI strategic plan term (2025-2027). They are divided into two main categories: (a) actions for service users and stakeholders and (b) actions for staff.

Please note that the action plan (incorporated into this report) is a living document – some details for actions in 2027 are still to be confirmed.

2.1 Actions for Service Users/Stakeholders

Table description

Table A below identifies seven actions. The table has five columns:

- In column one, the number of the action (A1-A7) is identified in numerical order.
- Column 2 provides a description of the action.
- Column 3 identifies who is responsible for implementing the action using role abbreviations or initialisms (see the key above the table).
- Column 4 identifies the planned due date for each action. Where the due date is as yet unknown, TBC (to be confirmed) is entered; this will arise because the action plan is a living document.
- Column 5 provides a progress or status update. Colour coding has also been used in the fifth column to signal the progress – red indicates not progressed, orange indicates partial progress and green indicates that the action is complete. Please note that no colour is used where the action is due in the future and ‘no update yet’ is the status update for these actions.

Abbreviations and Initialisms

To avoid making the table very text heavy, the following abbreviations and initialisms are used to identify the roles within NUI that have responsibility for implementing our planned actions. These are listed below:

- AO: Access Officer
- ASR: Academic Services & Registry
- F&A: Finance & Administration
- ICT: Information & Communications Technology
- PSD WG: Public Sector Duty (PSD) Working Group
- RO: Registrar’s Office
- Reg: Registrar
- SMT: Senior Management Team
- WO: Wellbeing Officer

TABLE A: Actions for Service Users/Stakeholders

Action	Description	Who	Due	Progress
A1	Improve website accessibility to comply with European Union (Accessibility of Websites and Mobile Applications of Public Sector Bodies) Regulations 2020	ICT, RO	TBC	In progress (new website in initial testing stage)
A2	Identify (and advertise) NUI's Access Officer	SMT, ICT	Q1 2025	Done* * See A2.2
	A2.1 Nominate Access Officer	SMT	Q1 2025	Done
	A2.2 Clearly identify Access Office and contact information on NUI website and relevant documentation	ICT, AO	Q4 2025	Awaiting new website; in the meantime, we advertise contact info in event promotion
A3	Continue to expand NUI inclusion-based awards (scholarships, grants and prizes) with particular attention to the groups that are under-represented in higher education: persons with disabilities, members of the Traveller Community, carers, lone parents, socio-economic disadvantaged persons. This is also a strategic priority for NUI.	ASR, F&A, RO	2026	Dependent on resources (and increased income)
	A3.1 ASR Team to liaise with Registrar and Finance & Administration regarding funding of such an award.	ASR	ongoing	No update yet
	A3.2 Consult with relevant stakeholders (NUI Student Council, Access Offices, Senate?)	ASR	funding dependent	Updated new Student Council members re activity in this area
A4	Introduce inclusive interviewing process for competitive awards	ASR	2027	No update yet

A5	Audit application forms for plain language	RO & ASR	2026	Project initiated early (Q4 2025)
	A6.1 Develop schedule (prioritise Matric, Doc Services, Awards, etc)	PSD WG	Q1 2026	Done Q4 2025
	A6.2 Communicate plan to staff	PSD WG	Q1 2026	Done Q3 2025
	A6.3 Undertake audits one area at a time in accordance with Plain English principles	PSD WG	2026	Scheduled
A6/ B9	Access audit for the NUI offices at 49 Merrion Square	F&A	2026	The general building audit (which needed to be done first due to heritage status) was completed in 2025.
A7	Inclusion audit / toolkit for NUI events	RO & AO	Q3 2026	Partially progressed
	A7.1 Research best practice	PSD WG	Q4 2025	Substantially progressed
	A7.2 Develop NUI resource	RO & AO	Q2 2026	No update yet
	A7.3 Promote internally and share externally	RO	Q3 2026	No update yet

2.2 Actions for Staff

Table description

Table B below identifies 13 actions. The table has five columns:

- In column one, the number of the action (B1-B13) is identified in numerical order.
- Column 2 provides a description of the action.
- Column 3 identifies who is responsible for implementing the action using role abbreviations or initialisms (see the key above the table).
- Column 4 identifies the planned due date for each action. Where the due date is as yet unknown, TBC (to be confirmed) is entered; this will arise because the action plan is a living document.
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Table B: Actions for Staff

Action	Description	Who	Due	Progress
B1	Appoint independent HR professional and produce staff handbook with a complete set of HR and human rights and equality (HRE) policies.	F&A	Q4 2025	Substantially progressed
	B1.1 Appoint independent HR professional	F&A	Q4 2024	Done
	B1.2 Update template handbook (provided by The HR Dept) for NUI purposes	F&A with AO	Q4 2025	In final stages
	B1.3 Formalise inclusive recruitment process (introduced Q4 2024) and support documentation.	AO	Q2 2025	Done
B2	Provide single point of access to all HR and HRE policies for all staff	F&A/AO	Q4 2025	Complete
B3	Further research needed on experience of staff in relation to two protected characteristics: family status and age	PSD WG	Q2 2025	Complete (but staff consultation will be repeated periodically)
	B3.1 Consult with staff about best approach for data gathering (online survey, confidential point-person, via line managers or via PSD WG members)	PSD WG	Q1 2025	Done
	B3.2 Collect data using agreed method(s)	PSD WG	Q2 2025	Done (Q3)
	B3.3 Analyse the data	PSD WG rep & AO	Q2 2025	Done (Q3)

B4	Management to explore process for addressing bullying and harassment, discrimination on basis of family status and discrimination on the basis of age with staff (subject to further information gathering on the latter two issues).	SMT, ICT	Q1 2025	Partially complete
	Interim action: B4.1 Raise awareness of processes around informal and formal reporting	PSD WG & SMT	Q1 2025	Done (Q4)
	Interim action: B4.2 Consider supports and training for all staff (including management).	AO & Reg		Guidance on using existing policies provided in Q3
B5	Develop formal disability policy and equality, diversity and inclusion statement	AO, PSD WG	Q4 2025	Substantially complete*
	B5.1 Develop disability in the workplace policy, approve and publicise	AO	Q4 2025	Policy completed and approved by SMT (early Q3). It has been disseminated to new staff Disability Group (July); will be shared with all staff as part of the new HR handbook in Q1 2026.
	B5.2 Develop, approve and publicise EDI statement	Reg, AO	Q2 2025	Done
B6	Introduce regular EDI training, including specific disability awareness training, for all staff	AO	At least once pa	Ongoing
	B6.1 Develop schedule for EDI training – identify providers, topics etc	AO, PSD WG	Q4 2025	In progress but not finalised
	B6.2 Implement for 2026	AO	2026	On track

B7	Ongoing promotion of EDI values and policies, e.g. through standing item on staff meeting agenda, events and training	RO & AO		Partially progressed
	B7.1 Add EDI standing item on staff meeting agenda	RO & AO	Q2 2025	Done Q4
	B7.2 Organise events on EDI matters	AO & PSD WG	ongoing	Great NUI Pride Bake Off Q2 2025; awareness emails re Men's Health Week (Men's handbook ordered from HSE)
	B7.3 Arrange EDI Training (see also B6)	AO		ShoutOut Training, early Q3 (B6 In progress)
B8	Improve inclusion of all staff in hybrid meetings	RO & all NUI	Q3 2025	Partially progressed
	B8.1 Improve technical equipment for meetings (e.g. introduce OWL or equivalent) in all meeting rooms	ICT	Q4 2025	Resource constraints
	B8.2 Develop brief policy to support more inclusive hybrid meetings	AO	Q3 2025	Done Q2
B9/A4	Accessibility audit of building	F&A	2026	Planned – required general building audit, which was completed 2025
B10	Accessibility audit of work practices	NUI – lead TBC	2027	Need to identify resources/leads
	Interim action: B10.1 Generate procedure documents for new processes and review for accessibility/inclusion	TBC		No update yet

	Interim action: B10.2 Develop process and plan for full implementation, including training or resource identification.	TBC		No update yet
B11	Introduce health, nutrition and wellbeing activities, events, workshops for staff	WO	2025	Complete (with work ongoing)
	Immediate action: B11.1 Raise awareness of currently available resources in this area (e.g. seminar from VHI on making the most of the EAP).	AO	Q1 2025	Done. Additional actions: appointed Wellbeing Officer who arranged yoga classes and coordinated a heart health steps challenge. Comms Officer spotlights VHI EAP resources in internal newsletter; AO has added resources to central Teams channel.
B12	Explore disability support group for staff	AO	Q1 2025	Done Q1 (group met Q3)
B13	Athena SWAN preparations (during the strategic plan term 2023-2027).	PSD WG	2027	Planned for 2027 (planning in 2026)
	B13.1 Establish Self-Assessment Team, request support pack from Advance HE			No update yet
	B13.2 Identify key actions for preparing professional unit submissions			No update yet
	B13.3 Identify data collection required			No update yet

2.3 Annual Breakdown

Two actions are ongoing and apply every year:

- Promotion of EDI values (B7) – added to staff meeting agenda but other actions ongoing/
- Introduction of health, nutrition and wellbeing activities, events and workshops (B11) - **Completed** (i.e. introduced in 2025) and ongoing

2025	Status at year end, December 2025
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Website Accessibility (A1) 2. Access Officer (A2) 3. Appoint Independent HR professional and complete staff handbook (B1) 4. Single Point of Access for HR and HRE policies (B2) 5. Research on Family Status/Age issues (B3) 6. Process for addressing Bullying & Harassment (Age/Family Status) (B4) 7. Develop formal disability policy and EDI Statement (B5) 8. Improve inclusion of staff in hybrid meetings (B8) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In progress (dependent on new website, launching early 2026) 2. In progress (2/3 actions done, one dependent on new website) 3. Substantially complete (confirming last few details in handbook) 4. Complete 5. Complete 6. Partially complete 7. Substantially complete (final action dependent on handbook) 8. Partially complete (resource constraints)

2026	Status
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expand Inclusion-based Awards (A3) 2. Audit application forms for plain language (A5) 3. Access audit for 49 Merrion Sq (A6/B9) 4. Inclusion audit/toolkit for NUI Events (A7) 5. Introduce regular EDI training (B6) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> - 2. 1/3 actions complete (Q3 2025) - 4. 1/3 actions complete (Q4 2025) 5. Partially progressed (research on available training)

2027	Status
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce inclusive application/interviewing for competitive NUI Awards (A4) 2. Athena Swan Preparations (B13) 3. Accessibility Audit of Work Practices (B10) 	

2.4 Summary of Activity for 2025

Eight of the 19 actions in the PSD Action Plan were scheduled for implementation in 2025. The progress to the middle of December 2025 is as follows:

Two (25%) actions were fully completed (B2 and B3).

Two (25%) are in progress and dependent on a separate project with external delivery expected in early 2026 (A1 and A2).

Two (25%) were substantially progressed with only small sub-actions outstanding (B1 and B5), may be completed by the end of the year.

Two (25%) are partially complete with resource constraints to consider (B4 and B8).

(Note: An additional action to **introduce** activities in the area of wellbeing, B11, was completed in 2025 but this is also an ongoing activity so is not included above.)

Not all actions are equal – some were small changes and easily implemented, others were bigger and involved sub-actions and substantial time commitments. Some are dependent on third parties over which we have limited control. Significant progress has been made in a relatively wide-range and high volume of actions with a small team of busy but committed colleagues. We have, of course, more to do.

3 Further Work

3.1 Surveys

Regular surveys of stakeholders and staff needs to be embedded (to assist in future external reviews, to support PSD work, and to keep up-to-date with stakeholders in general).

The first priority for further data collection was the two areas (age and family status) in which concerns were flagged but data was insufficient for us to understand the issues properly. We consulted with staff in Q1 and it was agreed that we would distribute a survey but also give colleagues the option of speaking with people directly, in confidence, if they wished. On reflection, it was noted that there were responses in the survey relating to gender that also warranted further investigation.

The follow-on survey was done in early Q3 and the results shared in early Q4. We plan to repeat this survey every year with slight modifications to enable greater detail/context to be shared by those who wish to do so.

[Stakeholder surveys?? Being deployed thematically, e.g. EDI survey for competitive award applicants, stakeholder survey of website etc?]

3.2 Integration of PSD into Strategic Planning

When the next strategic planning cycle begins (in 2027), the PSD process will be integrated and embedded in the next strategic plan documentation.

3.3 Reporting

It is a requirement of the Public Sector Duty that implementation of actions arising from the assessment exercise are reported and published annually. This report is the first progress report - noting developments, challenges and achievements – of the current strategic cycle, which concludes in 2027. Two more reports will follow in December 2026 and December 2027.

4 A Note on this Report

Closed-loop institutional Co-Pilot was used to analyse the accessibility of the tables in this report, and minor changes have been made based on the recommendations made.